

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
Case No. 20-cv-954

FARHAD AZIMA,

Plaintiff,

v.

NICHOLAS DEL ROSSO and VITAL  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC.,

Defendants.

**PLAINTIFF'S  
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT  
OF MOTION TO SEAL**

Plaintiff Farhad Azima hereby respectfully submits this Memorandum of Law in Support of his Motion to Seal Exhibit 1 in support of Plaintiff's Response in opposition to Defendants' (Third) Motion for Protective Order (ECF No. 142).

In considering a party's motion to seal certain documents, the Court "must comply with certain substantive and procedural requirements." *Va. Dep't of State Police v. Wash. Post*, 386 F.3d 567, 576 (4th Cir. 2004). The Court must (1) give the public notice and a reasonable chance to challenge the motion to seal the documents; (2) consider less drastic alternatives to sealing, including redaction; and (3) if it decides to seal the documents, make specific findings and state the reasons for its decision to seal over the alternatives. *Id.*

As to the substance of the motion to seal, the Court "first must determine the source of the right of access with respect to each document, because only

then can it accurately weigh the competing interests at stake.” *Id.* The Court may seal documents “if the public's right of access is outweighed by competing interests.” *In re Knight Pub. Co.*, 743 F.2d 231, 235 (4th Cir. 1984). The factors the Court takes into account in this regard include “whether the records are sought for improper purposes, such as promoting public scandals or unfairly gaining a business advantage; whether release would enhance the public's understanding of an important historical event; and whether the public has already had access to the information contained in the records.” *Id.* Based on an evaluation of these and any other relevant factors, the Court must find that the justification for sealing documents overcomes both the First Amendment and common law presumption of access.

The material Plaintiff seeks to seal in Exhibit 1 includes excerpts from the deposition of Mr. Del Rosso. At various times, Defendants have taken shifting and inconsistent positions about what categories of information should be treated as confidential. Out of an abundance of caution and in order to avoid burdening the Court with addition litigation at this time, Plaintiff is filing the materials in Exhibit 1 under seal, but reserves the right to address confidentiality issues with respect to portions of the deposition transcript in later proceedings.

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiff Farhad Azima respectfully requests that his Motion to Seal Exhibit 1 be granted, or in the alternative that he be given reasonable time to attempt to redact the Exhibit as ordered by the Court to be redacted.

This, the 17th day of February, 2023.

**WOMBLE BOND DICKINSON (US) LLP**

/s/ *Ripley Rand*  
Ripley Rand  
North Carolina Bar No. 22275  
Christopher W. Jones  
North Carolina Bar No. 27625  
Jonathon Townsend  
North Carolina State Bar No. 51751  
555 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1100  
Raleigh, N.C. 27601  
Phone: 919-755-2100  
Fax: 919-755-2150  
Email: [ripley.rand@wbd-us.com](mailto:ripley.rand@wbd-us.com)  
[chris.jones@wbd-us.com](mailto:chris.jones@wbd-us.com)  
[jonathon.townsend@wbd-us.com](mailto:jonathon.townsend@wbd-us.com)

**MILLER & CHEVALIER CHARTERED**

Kirby D. Behre (*pro hac vice*)  
Timothy P. O'Toole (*pro hac vice*)  
Joseph Rillotta (*pro hac vice*)  
Ian Herbert (*pro hac vice*)  
Calvin Lee (*pro hac vice*)  
Cody Marden (*pro hac vice*)  
900 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
Telephone: (202) 626-5800  
Fax: (202) 626-5801  
Email: kbehre@milchev.com  
totoole@milchev.com  
jrillotta@milchev.com  
iherbert@milchev.com  
clee@milchev.com  
cmarden@milchev.com

*Counsel for Plaintiff*

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Defendants.

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send electronic notification of this Notice to the following attorneys:

Brandon S. Neuman, Esq.

John Branch, III, Esq.

Jeffrey M. Kelly, Esq.

Nathaniel J. Pencook, Esq.

NELSON MULLINS RILEY & SCARBOROUGH, LLP

301 Hillsborough Street, Suite 1400

Raleigh, NC 27603

[brandon.neuman@nelsonmullins.com](mailto:brandon.neuman@nelsonmullins.com)

[jeff.kelly@nelsonmullins.com](mailto:jeff.kelly@nelsonmullins.com)

[nate.pencook@nelsonmullins.com](mailto:nate.pencook@nelsonmullins.com)

[john.branch@nelsonmullins.com](mailto:john.branch@nelsonmullins.com)

Tel.: 919.329.3800

Fax.: 919.329.3799

Samuel Rosenthal, Esq.  
Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP  
101 Constitution Ave NW, Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20001  
Tel.: 202-689-2951  
Fax: 202-689-2860  
[sam.rosenthal@nelsonmullins.com](mailto:sam.rosenthal@nelsonmullins.com)

*Counsel for Defendants*

John Charles Quinn, Esq.  
Kaplan Hecker & Fink LLP  
350 Fifth Avenue  
Ste. 63<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10118  
Email: [jquinn@kaplanhecker.com](mailto:jquinn@kaplanhecker.com)  
Tel.: 212-763-0883  
Fax.: 212-564-0883

Kearns Davis, Esq.  
Daniel D. Adams, Esq.  
Brooks Pierce McLendon Humphrey & Leonard LLP  
PO Box 26000  
Greensboro, NC 27420-6000  
Email: [kdavis@brookspierce.com](mailto:kdavis@brookspierce.com)  
Email: [dadams@brookspierce.com](mailto:dadams@brookspierce.com)  
Tel.: 336-373-8850  
Fax.: 336-378-1001

*Counsel for Dechert LLP*

Kieran Shanahan, Esq.  
Shanahan Law Group  
128 East Hargett Street, Suite 300  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
Tel.: 919-264-7515  
Email: [kieran@shanahanlawgroup.com](mailto:kieran@shanahanlawgroup.com)

*Counsel for Shanahan Law Group*

This, the 17th day of February, 2023.

**WOMBLE BOND DICKINSON (US) LLP**

/s/ Ripley Rand

Ripley Rand  
North Carolina State Bar No. 22275  
555 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1100  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
Telephone: (919) 755-8125  
Facsimile: (919) 755-6752  
Email: [ripley.rand@wbd-us.com](mailto:ripley.rand@wbd-us.com)

*Counsel for Plaintiff*